

feedstock with a 95% boiling point of 450°C or less and a sulfur content of 500 ppm or less with the sulfided catalyst under conditions of elevated temperature and pressure to form a product with a sulfur content of less than 200 ppm.

8. (amended) A two-step process for converting a starting feedstock having a sulfur content of above 0.1 wt.% into a product having a sulfur content of 200 ppm or less, wherein the process comprises sulfidation of a first and a second catalyst said first catalyst comprising a Group VIB metal component, a Group VIII metal component, and an organic additive on a carrier, and said second catalyst comprising a molybdenum component, a nickel component and an organic additive on a carrier, contacting a feedstock with a 95% boiling point of 450°C or less and a sulfur content of 0.1 wt.% or more with the first sulfided catalyst under conditions of elevated temperature and pressure to form a product with a sulfur content of less than 500 ppm, and contacting the effluent from the first catalyst, optionally after fractionation or intermediate phase separation, with the second sulfided catalyst under conditions of elevated temperature and pressure to form a product with a sulfur content of less than 200 ppm.

Please cancel claim 9.

Remarks

The instant amendments are considered necessary and not earlier presented, because of further input by the inventor, Dr. Plantenga, provided after the instant rejection was issued. The further input comprises the Declaration under 37 CFR § 1.132 attached hereto that illustrates the surprising and unexpected discovery of the superior performance of a catalyst comprising molybdenum and nickel in ultra-deep HDS. The amendments to claims 1 and 8 do not present any new issues that would require further examination on the part of the Examiner, in view of original claim 9 that included the use of a catalyst comprising molybdenum and nickel in ultra-deep HDS.